

97TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2355

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide that persons with impaired hearing are ensured reasonable access to telephone service.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 1 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 22), 1982

Mr. CANNON (for himself, Mr. GOLDWATER, and Mr. RIEGLE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide that persons with impaired hearing are ensured reasonable access to telephone service.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That the Congress hereby finds that—

4 (1) all persons subscribing to or otherwise receiv-
5 ing telephone service in the Nation should receive the
6 best service which is technologically possible;

7 (2) currently available technology is capable of
8 providing telephone service to some of those individuals
9 who, because of hearing impairments, require telephone

1 reception by means of hearing aids with induction coils,
2 or other inductive receptors;

3 (3) the lack of technical standards ensuring com-
4 patibility between hearing aids and telephones has pre-
5 vented receipt of the best service which is technologi-
6 cally possible; and

7 (4) adoption of technical standards is required in
8 order to ensure compatibility between telephones and
9 hearing aids, thereby accommodating the needs of indi-
10 viduals with hearing impairments.

11 SEC. 2. Title II of the Communications Act of 1934 (47
12 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end thereof
13 the following new section:

14 "TELEPHONE SERVICE TO PERSONS WITH IMPAIRED
15 HEARING

16 "SEC. 225. (a) The Commission shall establish such
17 regulations as are necessary to ensure reasonable access to
18 telephone service by persons with impaired hearing.

19 "(b) In ensuring such access, the Commission shall re-
20 quire that coin-operated public telephones be designed, man-
21 ufactured, and operated so as to be capable of coupling with
22 hearing aids through the use of an induction coil or other
23 inductive receptor. The Commission may also require that
24 other telephones frequently used by the public (such as tele-
25 phones in hospital rooms), or provided for emergency access

1 (such as telephones in elevators), be similarly designed, man-
2 ufactured, and operated.

3 “(c) The Commission may establish such technical
4 standards as are required in order to ensure compatibility be-
5 tween telephones and hearing aids.

6 “(d) The Commission shall establish such requirements
7 for the labeling of equipment and packaging materials for
8 equipment as are needed to provide adequate information to
9 consumers on the compatibility between telephones and hear-
10 ing aids.

11 “(e) In any rulemaking to implement the provisions of
12 this section, the Commission shall specifically consider the
13 costs and benefits to all telephone users, including persons
14 with and without hearing impairments. The Commission shall
15 ensure that regulations adopted to implement this section do
16 not discourage or impair the development of new
17 technology.”.

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